

in the Office Action to support the rejection. Therefore, Applicants surmise that the Examiner may have intended to lodge a non-statutory double patenting rejection. However, reconsideration and withdrawal of this statutory double patenting rejection are respectfully requested since there is no identity of the claims.

Claims 15-29 also stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over *Shrader et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,900,874). This rejection is respectfully traversed. Prior to discussing this ground of rejection, a brief summary of Applicant's novel methods and systems for providing flexible customization of graphical user interfaces will be described in order to highlight some of the advantageous characteristics thereof.

According to exemplary embodiments of the present invention, an improved visual appearance can be provided by providing an appearance management layer that gives a user the ability to customize the appearance and behavior of the desktop. Themes can be created which include sets of desktop objects that are designed to project an overall impression to the area. The user can switch between themes to change this overall impression. The terms "theme" and "themes" refer to coordinated designs of interface objects and object parts that create a distinct visual appearance on the display.

For example, claim 15, among other features, recites:

"...a first portion having stored therein data relating to a first set of user interface objects whose individual appearances are collectively associated with a first common theme;

a second portion having stored therein data relating to a second set of user interface objects each of which correspond in function to an associated interface object in said first set, but whose individual appearances are collectively associated with a second common theme..."

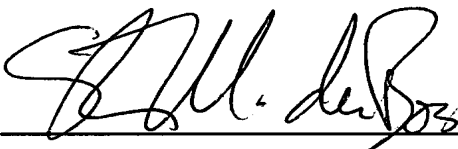
In the Office Action, the Examiner correctly acknowledges that *Shrader et al.* assigns different functions to the icons and the transformed icons. *Shrader et al.* explicitly teaches a method for changing information associated with an icon from one state to another. See Column 2, lines 47-63. With different functions, *Shrader et al.*'s transformed icons are, thus, completely different objects from the original icons and do not have functions which correspond to the original icons, as called for in Applicants' claims. Therefore, Applicants

respectfully submit that *Shrader et al.*, in fact, teaches away from the present invention. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that *Shrader et al.* could not have rendered the claimed invention unpatentable. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is respectfully requested.

All of the objections and rejections raised in the Office Action have been addressed. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Prompt notice of the same is earnestly solicited. Should the examiner have any questions regarding this response or the application in general, he is urged to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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